

Our Ref; PRC/JYD

30 September 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope everyone has had a good week. It's hard to believe we are entering week five of the first term but I am delighted to report that students are working hard and learning well. The new post Covid reset of expectations and systems is going very well; thank you to all parents who support our high expectations.

I have a number of updates:

Attendance

Gosforth Academy expect all students to aim for 100% attendance. We believe that students who are punctual and achieve a high level of attendance are given access to high quality teaching and learning opportunities and will leave school with better qualifications and access to greater employment opportunities.

Over the last two years we have approached the management of Attendance with due consideration to the pandemic. However, the Government have now asked schools to have a greater focus on attendance, so please do not be surprised to receive traffic light letters and phone calls home if your child's attendance falls below certain percentages. Legal monitoring will also resume and any holiday taken during term time will be unauthorised.

We are well aware that there might be good reason for an absence but putting school attendance back under the spotlight is a school and national priority as it makes such a difference to outcomes.

Year 11 and Prom Criteria

At October half term our Year 11 students will only have two terms before they go on study leave. There are a number of initiatives up and running already to ensure students are fully prepared for GCSE exams, some of them include Assertive Mentoring; Homework Club; Registration programme and Period 7 extra Maths/English. As the year progresses other interventions will also be in place. However, this complements, not substitutes, engaging thoroughly in lessons and completing all homework. Mrs Marklew (Director of Main School) is planning November Review Day where all parents/carers will have an opportunity to have a face-to-face appointment to check on their child's progress; this is soon followed by Year 11 parents' evening before Christmas.

Preit Chahal Principal

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To encourage students to work hard, have good attendance and take full advantage of revision sessions below is the criteria for attending the end of year prom. Students **must**:

- Attend all review day sessions, if invited.
- Participate in three additional revision classes of their choice prior to mock exams in January 2023.
- Have a total of at least nine intervention stamps by Easter and fifteen by the time study leave begins. These can be made up of Review days and Revision classes for both Mocks and Summer Exams.
- Attend 7 additional study mornings after May half term, if invited.

Beyond the academic commitments, we also require:

- Good behaviour in Year 11
- Achieving the silver award under the PRAISE Code (1000 stamps)
- Attendance of 95% or above
- Good punctuality
- Good behaviour while on study leave and throughout the exam period.

It's never too early to begin to think about progression beyond Year 11, so a date for your diary is our Sixth Form Open Evening on Wednesday 18th January 2023. This will be followed by a progression appointment in February for every student in Year 11 with a member of our Sixth Form team, when specialist advice and support will be given regarding next steps.

Compulsory Coats-after October Half Term

I would like to remind parents that the wearing of the school coat is **compulsory from October to February half term**. Most Year 10 and Year 11 students will have one from last year and are wearing it already. For Year 9 parents in particular, please ensure your child has a coat ready to wear from Monday 31st October. If you still need a school coat there are a number of ways we can help but please contact admin@ga.newcastle.sch.uk and we will do our best to help.

Support with Uniform Costs

In the vast majority of cases, the students have had perfect school uniform and have looked extremely smart coming to school. Where there are teething problems, parents and carers are being contacted by Year Teams. Thank you for your support with this.

If at any point you are facing any difficulty in providing uniform for your child, please contact your child's Head of Year. There are many ways in which we can and will help.

E-Safety

Safety online remains a high priority. Some of the things we do to ensure this include:

- An online safety area on our website full of useful resources to help parents([Online Safety \(gosforthacademy.org.uk\)](https://www.gosforthacademy.org.uk));
- Education on online safety through the Assembly, PSHCE, Citizenship and Tutorial programmes;
- Strong and robust safeguarding policies, which encourage students to report any incidents to a member of staff;
- Partnership work where appropriate e.g. parents, Police and Social Care;

- Searching and confiscating where required;
- All computers (and other ICT equipment) have fully up to date anti-virus and anti-spam protection;
- all software is properly licensed for use within school;
- appropriate measures are in place to prevent the bypassing of filtering or network security systems;
- devices not owned by the organisation (such as personally-owned devices) cannot connect directly to secure systems
- all users have personal, identifiable and secure logons to network resources so that illegal/inappropriate use can be identified to a particular user.
- all users of our systems have regular updates where the latest information surrounding being e-safe is shared.
- All online communication between staff and students is done via school email accounts monitored by Newcastle City Council, or via our Frog VLE.
- Computer usage is monitored by Smoothwall and any alerts that meet the threshold are investigated by the Safeguarding team.

Reading

Fluent and avid readers will not only achieve well academically, but will be well rounded and interesting people as they enter the adult world. As a High school the vast majority of our students arrive at Gosforth Academy as competent readers. Those who do not are supported in smaller groups with a modified curriculum. We want reading for pleasure to be a lifelong hobby irrespective of age and have therefore built this in to curriculum time. Every Monday Period 7 in Years 9-11 there is an opportunity to do some silent reading. The same is true for Year 12 and 13 during free periods every day periods 1 & 2. Please can I encourage parents to send their child in with an appropriate reading book? Alongside this there are trips to the library in English lessons, Literacy activities embedded into lessons and author visits.

Finally...

Beyond the classroom, we've had a trip to watch Blood Brothers at Sunderland Empire, multiple sporting fixtures, surfing at Tynemouth and a Year 12 Parents' Welcome Evening. I've just signed off trips in October to Dunstanburgh Castle, St James' Park and a careers event to Glasgow. I know Mr Howard is launching the enrichment programme very soon so more to come for extra-curricular.

A reminder that Monday 3rd October is a Staff Training day therefore no students are required in school.

Have a great weekend.

Yours sincerely,



Preit Chahal
Principal